

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LENDING 00483 090821Z

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ACTION CU-03

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FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1142

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USIA WASHDC

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EO 11652N/A

TAGS: SCUL UR

SUBJ: METROPOLITAN/HERMITAGE EXCHANGE

REF: MOSCOW 4564

FOR P&C

1. CONSUL GENERAL HOSTED WORKING LUNCH MONDAY, APRIL 7, FOR HERMITAGE DIRECTOR PIOTROVSKIY AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR SUSLOV TO DISCUSS GENERAL PROGRESS METROPOLITAN EXCHANGE. PLANS ARE FOR PIOTROVSKIY TO TRAVEL TO US VISITING NEW YORK, AND, PER HAMMER'S SUGGESTION, LOS ANGELES. SUSLOV WILL VISIT WASHINGTON.

2. DURING CONVERSATION PIOTROVSKIY MENTIONED THAT (A) THERE HAD BEEN A MEETING WITH HAMMER AS PER REFTEL; (B) THAT HAMMER AND NATIONAL GALLERY DIRECTOR BROWN HAD MADE A FLYING (LITERALLY) VISIT TO LENINGRAD, WHERE THEY HAD REPORTEDLY REACHED AN AGREEMENT ON A LIST OF FIFTY PICTURES (40 FROM HERMITAGE AND 10 FROM PUSHKIN MUSEUM) WHICH WILL TRAVEL TO US FOR EXHIBIT APPARENTLY IN WASHINGTON TO COINCIDE WITH BREZHNEV VISIT TO US.

3. IN RETURN SOME FIFTY PICTURES WILL BE SENT FROM US FOR EXHIBIT IN USSR, ACCORDING TO LEN CITY SOVIET CULTURAL DIRECTORATE, "IN 1976".

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4. PIOTROVSKIY IN RESPONSE TO DIRECT QUESTION AS TO WHO WOULD OPEN MET EXHIBIT IN LENINGRAD WAS SLIGHTLY EVASIVE, THROUGH HE OPINED THAT "PROBABLY" DEMICHEV AND POPOV WOULD COME. QUESTION AS TO KURGLOVA'S ACTIVITIES IN FAVOR OF OLD HOME TOWN ELICITED RESPONSE THAT SEH IS INVOLVED ONLY IN NATIONAL, VS INTERNATIONAL MATTERS AT MINCULT.

5. IN RE QUESTION OF HOW TO GET MET TREASURES INTO COUNTRY (DISCUSSED HERE RECENTLY WITH MET REPRESENTATIVE PILGRIM) NO DECISION YET REACHED. HERMITAGE FAVORS DIRECT FLIGHT(S) OR CLOSED TRUCKS FROM HELSINKI. AS TO DELICATE QUESTION OF CLIMATE CONTROL AT WINTER PALACE, ANSWER WAS "WE ARE TAKING ALL MEASURES".

6. POST WOULD APPRECIATE ANY ADDITIONAL AVAILABLE INFORMATION AS TO HAMMER-HERMITAGE-NATIONAL GALLERY EXCHANGE.
NEUBERT

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